



*The Radio Amateur Society
of Australia*

August 2025

QTC

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8 You are welcome to join RASA or simply
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17 Image courtesy of Bob VK6POP. The
Cape Leeuwin Lighthouse has been
activated in the International Lighthouse
& Lightships weekend for many years.

Contributing Items For QTC Magazine

20 QTC Magazine welcomes contributions
for future editions. When planning to
submit an article, please read our
submission guidelines first.

22 Following the guidelines will save you
and the editing team a lot of time and
effort. The guidelines are [HERE](#)

25

Perks of being a Ham Radio Operator



From the Vice President

Bob VK6POP

The last couple of months has been a time of regrouping and recharging for the RASA team, since our face to face team meeting in May.

At the meeting we decided to implement the “Welcome to Amateur Radio” brochure project as a free service to the Amateur Radio community. Meanwhile development of the “This is Amateur Radio” website continues.

Other things keeping the team busy are the ongoing maintenance and reorganising of RASA’s web resources, and of course the monthly production of QTC Magazine.

The team has resolved to have a table at Hamfests as much as we can manage. It’s a big country. Feel free to invite RASA to be at your event, and we’ll see what we can do. We believe that it is important to be able to talk to people, tell them what RASA is about, and answer their questions.

On another subject, let’s talk about volunteering. RASA struggles to recruit volunteers. Is it just us? I thought about it a bit, and decided to look a bit wider before beating our corporate breast and mumbling “mea culpa” in unison.

The first port of call was the other representative organisation for Amateur Radio in Australia, the Wireless Institute of Australia (WIA). I looked through their website, at the list of committees.

There were many vacant positions, people on more than one committee, and at least one deceased person listed. So it appears we have similar issues when it

comes to getting volunteers to join the team, although RASA has no noticeably deceased persons on its committee.

Looking a little further, I visited the Volunteering Australia website for more information. I found their latest research “Ongoing Trends in Volunteering in Australia”. I only looked at the Abstract, leaving the heavier reading for later, and a possible larger treatment in a future QTC edition.

I think anecdotally we’ve all seen a drop off in volunteering over many years, however the COVID pandemic was a pivotal point in the timeline in terms of the decline in volunteering.

Apart from the general malaise that’s affecting volunteering broadly, we need to recognise that Amateur Radio occupies a small niche in the community, and is unlikely to see the benefits of random people wondering what they have to offer the world, suddenly realising that Amateur Radio is a worthy beneficiary.

Source:

[The Volunteering Australia website](#)



From the Editor



The RASA team has been busy lately with new projects in hand, maintaining existing resources, and always with an eye on the future. It is the future of Amateur Radio that drives us.

RASA is determined to make the pathway into Amateur Radio easier and less expensive. I know that straight off some people will interpret “easier” as dumbing down the hobby, but that is far from the case. To understand why this is so, you must understand that the curricula for the study courses for the three levels of qualification are set by the regulator, the ACMA, and are guided by international treaties.

Indeed the “severity” of exams has changed over the years. Was this done to “dumb down” the hobby? No, it was not. One of Amateur Radio’s guiding principles is that it is a hobby of ongoing self-learning. This implies that you should not have to know *everything* to qualify. But you do need to know *enough*, hence the multi choice questions on subjects plucked out of the curriculum.

RASA as an organisation has chosen to go down the path of providing free resources to new and prospective Amateurs, and we have done so with the VK Regs website, the Foundation Level Study Guide, the Welcome to Amateur Radio Guidebook and QRM Guru, and of course this august publication, QTC.

Under development is the “This is Amateur Radio” website, and near completion and implementation is the “Welcome to Amateur Radio” brochure, which is being distributed to clubs as I write.

What’s next for RASA? When the dust settles from current projects, we’ll regroup and take on more challenges. In the meantime, behind the scenes, we’re consolidating our web resources and brushing up our administration and governance processes.

In this edition of QTC, you’ll see our preparations for RASA’s Annual General Meeting. Do you think you have something to contribute to RASA? Drop an email to info@vkradioamateurs.org if you’d like to find out more about what we do and how we work. There’s an ad for a vacant position on the QTC publication team. Interested?

If you’re unable to join us in an active role, something you *can* do is to promote RASA at club meetings. Challenge the bias when you hear it. Tell people about the free RASA resources. Share QTC magazine around.

And don’t forget, get active, get on-air, try out a contest, build a kit or antenna, or experiment with new modes. And feel free to share your stories with our readers.

Remember RASA exists to support and develop Amateur Radio.



**The Radio Amateur Society
of Australia**

RASA Annual General Meeting - Notice to Members

THE RASA AGM IS ON SEPTEMBER 6th 10.30 AM EST

Background

The Radio Amateur Society of Australia was formed 7 years ago. There was a lot going on with the structure, privileges and exam processes of Amateur Radio, all under the microscope. The representation that Australia had at that time was not good. It was a long way from good.

RASA was formed to make a difference, and we have done that. Our slogan ***Being Heard Is Important*** has always been more than just a quest for stronger signals.

Today we have a new qualification structure that is free of licence fees. The ACMA examination service is fast and effective. The assessor network is strong.

Contesters have their 2x1 callsign system, a gain spearheaded by RASA, and we developed a world best-practice website for dealing with radio interference. RASA has produced free study books and resources for new candidates and a world class magazine.

There are still battles to be fought. Access to the 60m band and higher operator power levels are goals we will not let go. Still, the climate has shifted. The focus has to be about bringing more people into the hobby and retaining them. We are not staying still. We have plans and we are implementing them. Our new slogan shows that Amateur radio isn't a community broadcaster, it isn't CB radio. It's something better than that. The new slogan reflects the essence of what makes Amateur Radio special.



The RASA team is not large, it's certainly not wealthy, but it needs good member participation to stay strong. September 6th is our Annual General Meeting and in the weeks leading up to it, we implement our committee election cycle. If you have a little time and want to see our hobby prosper, contemplate nominating for a committee position on the approach to this AGM.

The process starts right now.

Countdown Sequence to the AGM

- August 7 All Committee positions become vacant, and nominations open
- August 12 Nominations close
- August 16 A bulletin is sent to all members listing the nominees and their resumes.

If there are more nominees than positions, then a ballot is declared OPEN. The ballot is conducted via email. A special [email address](#) is provided

August 29 A financial report is distributed to members via email.
Sept 4th The ballot closes and all material is examined by the Returns Officer.
Sept 6th Saturday 10:30am EST The AGM commences via Zoom.
It is recorded and uploaded to YouTube.

The full details of this process are available on the [RASA website](#)

RASA is not a public company. It is an Incorporated Association in the state of Victoria and registered as a National Representative Body with ASIC, which provides states and territories of Australia. Its committee is states.

As in many previous years, we wish to thank VK3GHM for accepting the role of Returns Officer

Please consider nominating yourself for a to find out more before you commit, [email us](#) and it.



The committee positions are:

President, Vice President, General Secretary, Admin Secretary, Treasurer

Bands are Dead?

By Bob VK6POP

I couldn't believe my eyes the first time I saw this cry "the band are dead" a bit over ten years ago. "Saw" because I was working SlowScan TV, and that message appeared as the image chirped and squawked its way onto the screen. It was from a station in the U.S.A. Talk about irony.

Recently, while looking through Ham Radio Facebook groups, I've seen the same message from various people. This right at the peak of the solar cycle, when most people are working some good DX. Someone told me the other day that they worked Australia to England CW on two watts.

But the bands are dead. People say so. Are they right or wrong?

My quick assumption is that they have little or no knowledge of how the useful frequencies change throughout the day. Long path, short path. It's not the same every day, and so forth. A.R. is not a telephone service.

What can we, the cognoscenti (this sounds awfully conceited but I like the word) in Amateur Radio do about it? A good start would be to encourage beginners to join an Amateur Radio club, or to team up with an experienced operator. It won't be perfect, but it's a start.

August is RASA's Membership Renewal Month



If you've already renewed this year then great, nothing to be done. If you send your \$10 now, your membership will be assured until September 2026

Let's be Candid. Everything RASA does for Amateur Radio is for everyone. We are not forcing people to pay before accessing our resources. Our mission is to help introduce new people into the hobby, to provide resources to radio clubs around Australia and to help them to boost their membership. This is important for the future of our hobby.

This year we are doing something special; printing lots of brochures aimed at introducing new people to the hobby via radio clubs and public presentations. These brochures are printed right here in Australia. We are making these available for groups, for free, around the country. (see our QTC article on this).

This initiative is not cheap, but we believe that the expense is worthwhile.

If you like what we do and want to help us achieve these goals, then your continued membership is how we make this happen. Times are tough for many, which is why we only seek \$10 and we are happy if you can do that. If you wish to donate a little more, that lets us do a little more. RASA is run by volunteers. There are no salaries, bonuses or rental payments. Everything we earn goes back into the hobby.

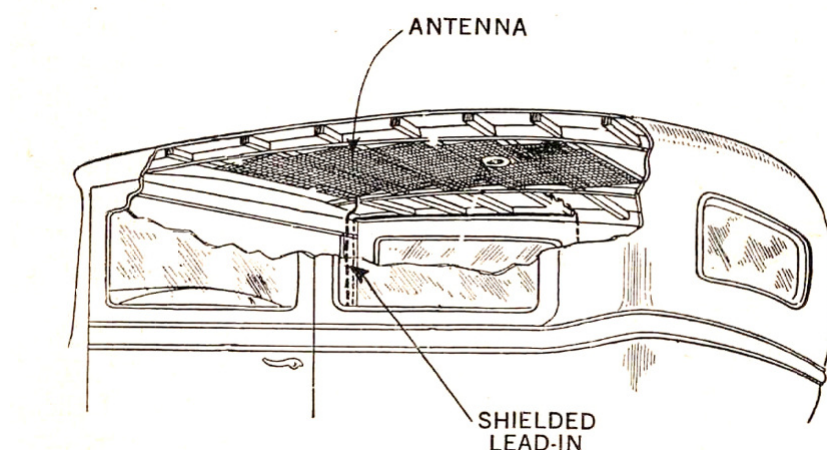
Visit vkradioamateurs.org, then click **Join or Renew** and follow the steps for a PayPal or EFT payment. **Click anywhere on this page for a direct link.** If you do an EFT, put your callsign in the description. We endeavour to email an acknowledgement within 1-2 days.

Become a Member If you are new to RASA, note that we only record a name, callsign (if any) and an email address and we do not share that information. We'd love to hear from you.

Mobile Antennas

Ian Jackson VK3BUF

Amateur radio antennas for vehicles are a difficult topic. There is a near endless selection of articles and videos that focus on branded antenna and comparisons. These tend to be long on product endorsement and short on antenna theory. As long as cars have been on the road there has been a demand for the perfect mobile antenna. This quest is ongoing.



Early vehicles with wood and fabric roofs fitted mesh sections for radio reception, yet such assemblies were horribly inefficient.

While it is true that transmitter antennas must adhere the principles of impedance and resonance, vehicle mounted antennas have other important parameters to satisfy. Unfortunately, the physical requirements are usually detrimental to performance. Any antenna placed on a vehicle will always be a compromise from perfection.

Here are some of these parameters:

- Must be near- omnidirectional
- Usually vertically polarised
- Must not be too high
- Must survive at high speeds
- Must not flex too much at speed
- Must survive occasional encounters with trees and foliage
- May need to be removed or lowered for garage parking

Like the antennas themselves, some of these rules may be bent, or even broken in the quest for improved performance. This 4-element cubical quad antenna for the 6 metre band is not only impractically unidirectional for a mobile, it is also unfriendly for garage parking and drive-through retail outlets. Some may regard such projections as 'ugly', but like so many other situations, beauty will always be in the eye of the beholder.



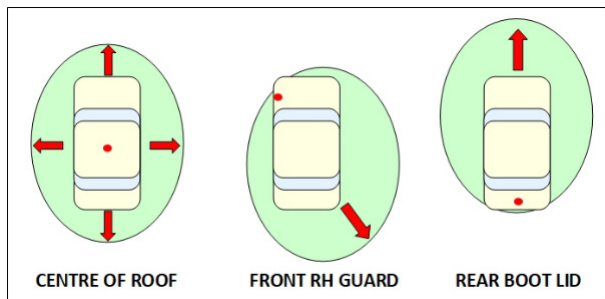
Direction and Polarisation

The first two items from our list say that mobile antennas should be omnidirectional and vertically polarised. Turning corners is something that cars do a lot of. If directional antennas were used, it would result in a major loss of signal. Constructing tough, horizontally polarised antennas that radiate in all directions simultaneously is not easy. While these antennas can be made for UHF and higher frequencies, the size of such HF antennas could mean that someone loses an eye. Vertical antennas solve this problem. Vertical antennas can send and receive in the horizontal plane while on the move and signals can remain relatively constant without too much variation while navigating traffic.

By convention mobile communications is conducted with vertically polarised antennas, even if this means antenna gain is compromised. The height of any HF mobile antenna is going to have size constraints. Drive-through bottle shops still have fluorescent lights and Melbourne still has tram lines. Plenty of operators will recognise the noise associated with entering a home garage without first un-screwing or lowering their antenna.

Ground Plane effects

The placement of a vertical antenna on a vehicle has a significant effect on how it radiates and receives from different directions. Most vertically polarised antennas use the metal body of the vehicle as a ground reference. A lack of ground plane in a given direction will cause deterioration of signal in that direction.



This image demonstrates how mobile antenna placement can distort the radiation pattern.

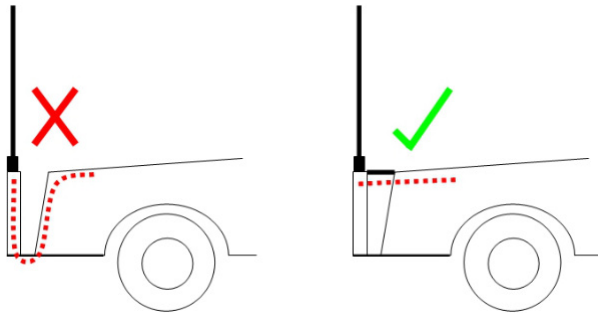
Ideally, placing a vertical antenna in the centre of a roof will produce a more balanced pattern. Other locations compromise that pattern. Most vehicles tolerate this reduction in performance through expedience of where an antenna may be placed without drilling holes in bodywork.

The example in this image shows the HF antenna on the bullbar and the VHF/UHF vertical on the bonnet edge. These are common choices, prioritising practicality over optimal placement.



Bull-bar Bonding

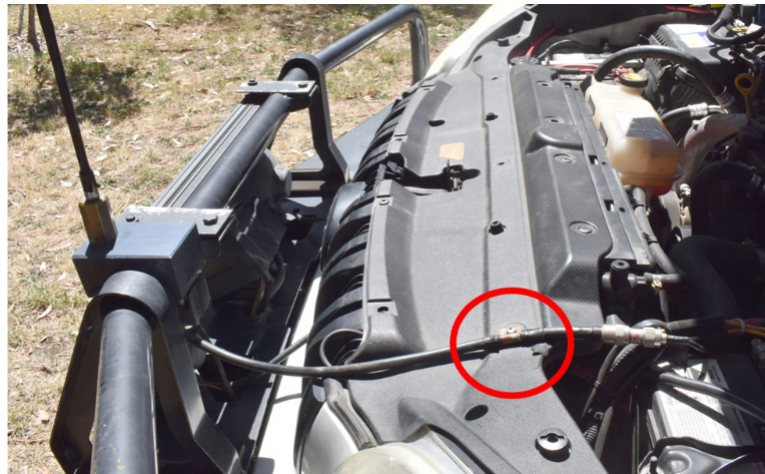
While bull-bars are a solid foundation for antenna mounts, many installers neglect additional grounding between the bull-bar and the vehicle body, leaving the ground path very low to the vehicle. This creates a significant interruption to the ground plane that results in poor performance and radiation pattern distortion that many operators are unaware of.



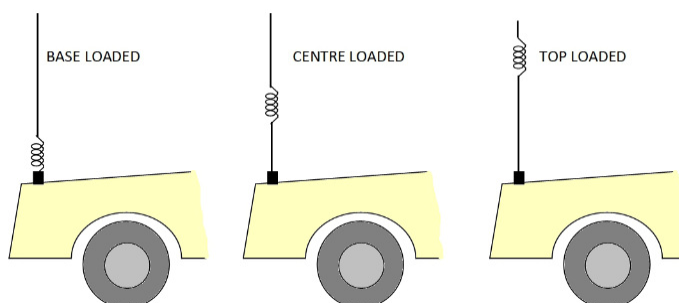
In this illustration we can see an example of a bad and better installation where electrical bonding between the body of the vehicle and the bull-bar has been added. This can be achieved with a copper strap or by bonding the coax braid to the vehicle close to the front, as shown (circled in red).

Loading Coils on mobiles

A quarter wavelength vertical antenna on the twenty metre band is about five metres long. This is too tall to be practical on a vehicle in a world of low power lines, hence a reduction in length is essential. To make vertical antennas shorter, loading coils are used. Such coils can be placed at the top, bottom or centre of a mobile antenna, or in the case of 'Helical' antennas, wide spaced windings are applied over the full length of the antenna.

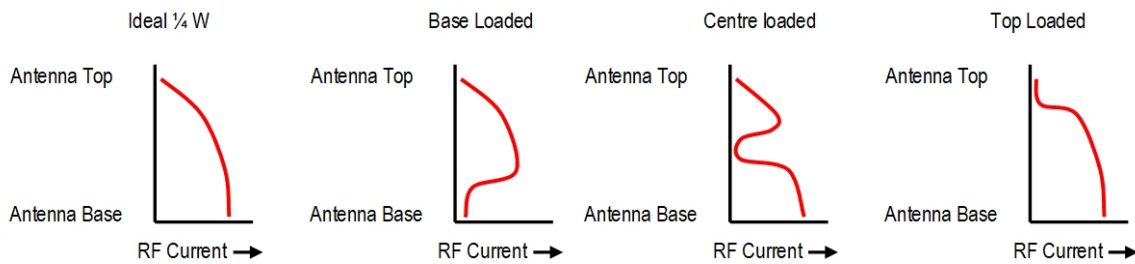


Placement of loading coils are another area of compromise. Antennas with a coil at the base, or 'Base Loaded' antennas are mechanically convenient because the weight and wind-loading of the coil is close to the vehicle, but unfortunately it will reduce the antenna performance.



HF mobile vertical antennas try to mimic the performance of a true quarter wave ground plane. A characteristic of the quarter wave antenna is that the transmitted RF current is highest at the feedpoint, reducing to zero at the tip of the antenna. Unfortunately, the presence of a loading coil creates a serious disruption to this current curve.

Consider the four plots below showing a vertical antenna and its transmitted current distribution curve.



To the left we show the curve on a genuine quarter wavelength ground plane, with high current at the base and zero current at the tip. Where a base loading coil has been added to shorten the antenna, even though it is resonant, much of the premium RF radiated current is lost within the coil. A centre loaded antenna is somewhat better, but still a compromise.

Top loaded antennas provide minimal disruption to this current curve and will provide superior performance. It will outperform a base loaded antenna with the same overall length. Despite this effect, many expensive and automatic base-loaded motor-tuned HF antennas are used. They may look very impressive, but performance will always be reduced by this design.

Many multi-band mobile antennas are sold with a spiral of wire wound over its length, with plug-in tapping points at intervals that permit band changes without physically swapping the antenna.



The Good the Bad and the Lumpy of Top Loaded antennas

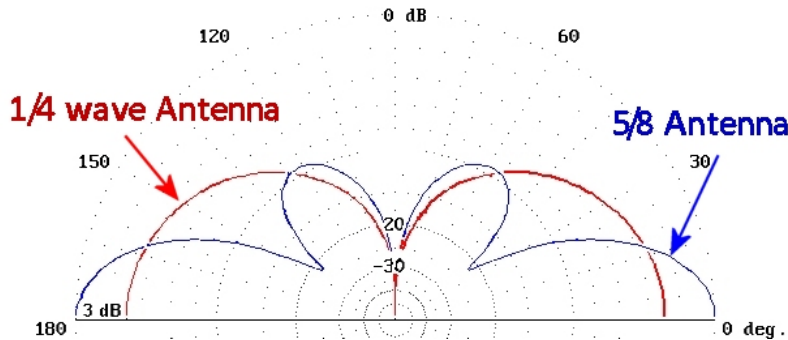
Unfortunately, top loaded antennas suffer from higher wind drag while moving and can encourage pendulum-like antenna sway, making them an unpopular aesthetic choice, however, many are still sold.

If HF mobile performance is the highest consideration, the best solution is to have several different top-loaded antennas, one for each band of use, then physically swap the entire antenna whenever the band is changed. This does require the driver to carry and store all the unused antennas somewhere, resulting in storage problems. One way to solve this is with an antenna storage tube on a roof rack that can hold a full set of HF antennas.



VHF/UHF radiation angle (5/8 vs 1/4 wave)

Antenna gain is always nice to have. With omnidirectional vertical antennas some gain can be achieved by lowering the radiation angle of the antenna. A 5/8th wavelength antenna will have a lower radiation angle than a basic 1/4 wave antenna, meaning the 5/8th will give better transmission range between two vehicles on a highway.



Operators should be aware that the 5/8th wave antenna is not always the best option. In the above plot the red curve shows the radiation angle of a 1/4 wave antenna and the blue shows the higher gain 5/8th wave angle. If the remote station is on a similar plane of elevation, the 5/8 performance is great. Where the distant station is on top of a hill, the lower radiation angle will reduce hilltop reception and reverting to a simple 1/4 wave antenna will outperform the 5/8th. This is not to say that operators should not use higher gain antennas while mobile, as most of the time the 5/8th is still the best choice. Still, it may be useful to carry a spare 1/4 wave antenna for situations of mismatched elevation if working a station or a repeater that is situated high above your current position.

VHF/UHF antenna brackets

There are not many places to mount an antenna in small cars. Larger cars can use z-shaped hood mount brackets with fair success. One of these can be seen here where a dual band 2M/70 cm antenna mounts on the edge of the engine bay and passes through the gap of the closed hood.

Where the vehicle has a hatchback rear, antenna mounts are difficult but not impossible.



This bracket (left) was fabricated from a folded plate of 3mm aluminium. It also supports a dual band VHF/UHF antenna. As previously noted, it is not an ideal location for radiation pattern, but it is discrete and still sufficiently low

to permit passage into most garages without first having to stop and unscrew the antenna.

Magnetic base antennas are a surprisingly good alternative

Where a vehicle is hired or on loan, the classic magnetic base antenna is very effective temporary installation. Placed in the centre of the roof, perhaps through some plastic film for paint protection, it's position can out-perform many permanent installations on the edge of a vehicle.



The best path for the coax cable is in the driver side rear-door window, with a small drop-loop to prevent water from following the cable. This rear off-side door is generally the one least used and is the most distant from roadside shrubbery.

Summary

Mobile operation has always been a major part of Amateur Radio. In terms of performance, there are good and bad mobile antennas, but few of them are great. For HF it will still be better if you can unroll some wire and coax and extend the antenna into some trees, but that won't help you on a freeway.

The choices we make when fitting out a vehicle will still determine how well we communicate while driving. Be prepared to experiment and find solutions that will work the best for your own situation.



***The Radio Amateur Society
of Australia***

DX Contest 2025



THIS IS AMATEUR RADIO

thisisamateurradio.com

We have only made small additions to the “This Is Amateur Radio” site this month. The rollout of the promotional brochures has taken some of the development hours.

There has been a jump in visits to the site, particularly from Foundation candidates using the blue tile study resources in preparation for their exams. This is likely to increase as more candidates locate the site through this new publicity for Amateur Radio.

The search engine feature is great for locating answers on specific topics of study.

Another great way to explore this site is to [Search by a key word of interest.](#)



Many digital accessory networks have already been added to the grey tile area, such as IRLP, EchoLink WSPR and RBN. In keeping with that theme, a page on the AllStarLink network has been added this month.

A reference to ***This Is Amateur Radio*** has been added to the new **Welcome to Amateur Radio** brochure as a free resource to all clubs. Produced and funded by RASA, the brochure is designed to invite new people into our hobby. As the brochure is rolled out across all clubs, it is likely that we will see a surge in activity on the TIAR website.

We aim to represent all the important aspects of Amateur Radio at this site. If you feel that you have something to add to a page, or are involved in a topic not yet covered, your contribution would be welcome.

Send enquiries to info@vkradioamateurs.org

Why do you do Amateur Radio?

By Paul VK2EX

I expect that you have been asked the question that many times, "why have you got all this equipment and antennas just to talk to your friends?"

You may answer, "well I talk to people all over the world" and they say "I can do that on face time". Well, this got me thinking of why I do go to amateur radio?

As Amateurs there are as many reasons as there are types of radios and activities you can think of, and for me, it is about the technical side of building, experimenting and socialising with people with the same interests. Personally I love HF communications and digital communication with 2 way chat features, SSTV and so on. A computer is most useful if it is plugged into something, like a radio.

I was asked these questions by someone close to me just a few weeks ago, and that made me think of a real answer that made sense to this younger person. My honest answer came back with "Social networking"! Asked to explain further, I asked them if they used social media, and the answer was yes, Facebook, Twitter, Snap Chat, Messenger, TikTok, Skype and some others I had never heard of or remembered. It was explained to me that I have friends all over the world that I keep in touch with and enjoy it.



So then I explained to them how Amateur radio is my version of Social media, I do the same sort of things but with a technical switch to it. But you have so much money tied up in all this equipment? I was told, so I asked how do you do it?

"On my Phone" was the answer.

So you have a phone, how much is that worth?

"Oh maybe \$1500.00 or so,

Do you have a phone plan?

"Yes \$120.00 per month and I get unlimited downloads and calls plus I can get a new phone every 2 years, look at it, it's really cool"

So your phone cost you \$1440.00 per year to talk to your friends, so \$2880.00 every two years with a new phone?



"Well I suppose so but I can do all these other things, how much do all these radios cost?"

So I went on to explain my setup and radios, antennas and other equipment,

3 HF radios, a Yaesu FT857 in the car with screwdriver antenna purchased 20 years ago, \$1700.00.

A Kenwood TS440s which I paid \$1100.00 30 years ago (this still works, but is my backup radio.)



An Icom IC3210A mobile radio \$800.00 30 years ago

A couple of FM900 recovered from trash and treasure sales (Modified to work on ham bands) maybe \$200.00 15-20 years ago.

A Diamond 500 2 & 70 CM vertical \$200.00 15 years ago

More recently my ICOM IC7300 \$1500.00 2 years ago

2 Element Ultra Beam \$3500.00 one year ago

A Homemade tilt over mast, which cost around \$500.00 in materials and a winch.

A Linear amplifier \$1300.00. (My first ever)

Plus cables and other homemade devices let's say another \$1500.00

In total around \$8600.00, and I have been an Amateur for 45 years so this hobby has cost me approximately \$192.00 per year.

Conservatively you have had your smart phone for say 10 years, and the cost is \$1440.00 per year so that is \$14,400.00 over 10 years and I don't need to upgrade anything for at least another 10 years and I get to socialize even if the phone networks go down or I am in the middle of nowhere.

So the outcome of this conversation made me realise that as well as the experimental and technical learning, we are also social networking, but we as Amateur radio operators have been doing our social networking for about a century, and the new mobile phone age is now just catching up.

I have made many friends over the years and some of these friendships are now life long, but mostly we just talk to random others, and learn about what their interests in the hobby are. We are also part of the Amateur radio service, Amateur because we cannot and do not charge for our communication services, but most importantly we are a decentralized community of highly skilled communication experts who can, and do support the community in times of natural disasters.



When I am asked what is all this about, I now answer that I am part of the Licensed Amateur radio communication service. I try not to use the word hobby, but I do let on the technical challenges as somewhat enjoyable. (Well I'm a nerd at heart).

This conversation made me realise the whys and hows, and now I have a structured answer to give these young individuals who are all about social networking (They have finally caught on, our secret is out). Their mobile phone is just a radio transmitter linked into a commercial network that they are paying for.

I have also realized that with this mindset we could encourage some of these younger people into the Amateur Radio Service, as we need them to repopulate our bands and keep all of this going, plus they bring in new ideas which will enhance our service, just look at what this younger generation can do with computers.

Well that's my slant on Amateur radio, what's yours?

73 from Paul VK2EX

Est. 1990

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REVERSE BEACON NETWORK

Located in Drouin West, Victoria, Australia.



A New RASA Resource - a Brochure

Last month, RASA announced the development of a new “Welcome to Amateur Radio” brochure to promote Amateur Radio. This is a general-purpose flyer for any club or group promoting Amateur Radio, and it is available from RASA **at no cost**.

Whenever a group is promoting the hobby in a public space, they can have some of these folded brochures at hand to provide to curious onlookers.



Even though it is good for Amateurs to have a friendly discussion about what we do, it helps to give the person something to take away with them for later consideration.



Printed and Distributed

The brochures have been printed, and we're in the process of stuffing a sample amount into envelopes and mailing to Australian Amateur Radio Clubs.

We're asking clubs to discuss use of the brochure, and if you decide in the affirmative, simply contact RASA and we will send some to you. As a further service, we will print a quantity of address labels (see left) for you to apply your club's details to the brochure.

Do we have your club's correct contact details?

Don't miss out on this free offer. Head on over to RASA's [Clubs Page](#) and complete the form at the bottom of the page, and we'll update our club spreadsheet.

If your club would like to obtain some of these brochures, just send an email request to info@vkradioamateurs.org.



There is no cost to clubs, however donations to help offset the cost are appreciated.

The Radio Amateur Society of Australia (RASA) vkradioamateurs.org



HAMFEST! ADVERTISE YOUR EVENT HERE
 Advertise your event in QTC Magazine

The Deadline for Copy is 1st of the Month

Cost to Clubs - \$ZERO
 Provide your artwork as a PDF

Contacts:

- Half page block approx 160wx110
- Or provide text doc with images separate.

info@vkradioamateurs.org
vkradioamateurs.org

Clubs may advertise their events in QTC free of charge

Take advantage of free club advertising in QTC. Once you've placed your advertisement, you can multiply its effectiveness simply by promoting QTC at your club, on your website, email reflectors and socials. To contact QTC Magazine, click on the image above.





RASA Club Support

RASA provides support to clubs by offering these free resources:

- A brochure to be used as a tool for introducing new people to the hobby
- Foundation Level Study Guide and the Welcome to Amateur Radio Guide Book
- Clubs that provide training, especially Foundation Level, may advertise their training in the Foundation Level Study Guide
- QTC Magazine
- Presentations about our work to clubs, either in person or via ZOOM
- Where practicable, holding a table at local hamfests.

Can We Contact You?

A difficult part of staying in contact is maintaining an up to date address list. RASA has a list of all Amateur Radio clubs, with contact email and snail mail address. These lists are difficult to maintain, however we invite clubs to make sure their information is correct.

An easy test:

RASA is in the process of mailing sample brochures to every Amateur Radio club that we know of. If you haven't received yours, perhaps we have old information about your club. THAT'S EASILY FIXED.

We recently added a "Clubs" item to the main menu of the RASA website, and at the bottom of the page is a simple form where you can provide up to date contact information about your club. Towards the bottom of the screen is a simple form for you to use to provide current information. No login required.

Thanks for your support.

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the address bar displaying <https://vkradioamateurs.org/clubs/>. The page title is "Club Contact Information Update". Below the title, there is a text box with the instruction: "Put your club's contact information here, and it will be included or updated on our club contact list." Below this, a red asterisk followed by the text "* Indicates required question" is shown. The form then has a label "Club Name (Full) *" and a text input field with the placeholder text "Your answer".

Resources for New and Aspiring Amateurs



Your Gateway to the World of Amateur Radio

Amateur Radio provides virtually unlimited opportunities for you to explore the technical, scientific and social aspects of this truly global hobby

Like all RASA resources, the FLSG is free, and we encourage you to share it with your club, friends and others who may be interested in becoming a radio amateur.

This resource is backed up by our other award-winning resources, including QRM Guru, the Welcome to Amateur Radio Guidebook, and VKRegs.

This resource is unique. Not only is it up-to-date with the latest information on the Class Licence, but it includes tailored instructional videos, links to useful websites, and extra "good to know" learning opportunities. All of this is backed up by a Knowledge Base with an integrated email-based helpdesk. So if you have feedback or questions, you can easily raise a ticket.

The FLSG is available [HERE](#)

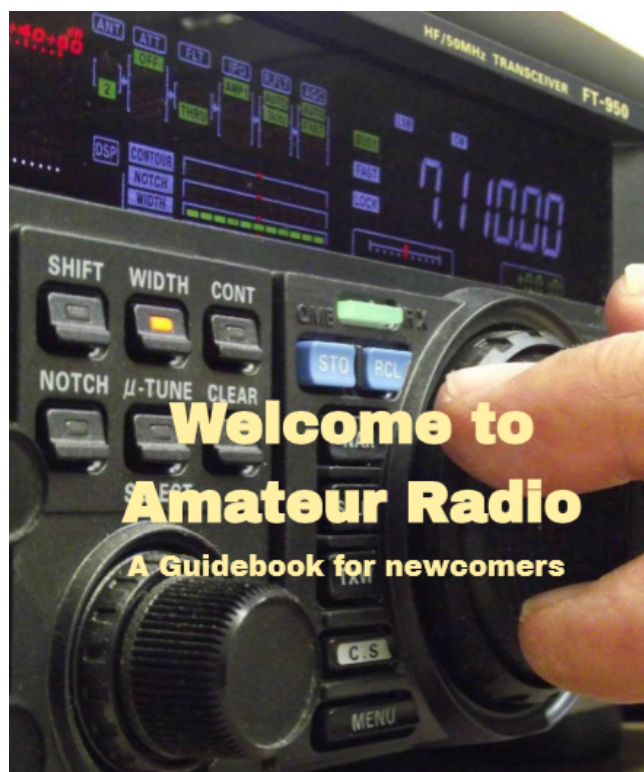


The RASA Welcome to Amateur Radio Guidebook provides an introduction to our hobby for new Foundation class amateurs.

The book is published digitally. It contains many hotlinks to external websites with useful information.

It is available as an Acrobat pdf file suitable for reading on a PC or tablet. It can be printed if required.

Download the guidebook [HERE](#).



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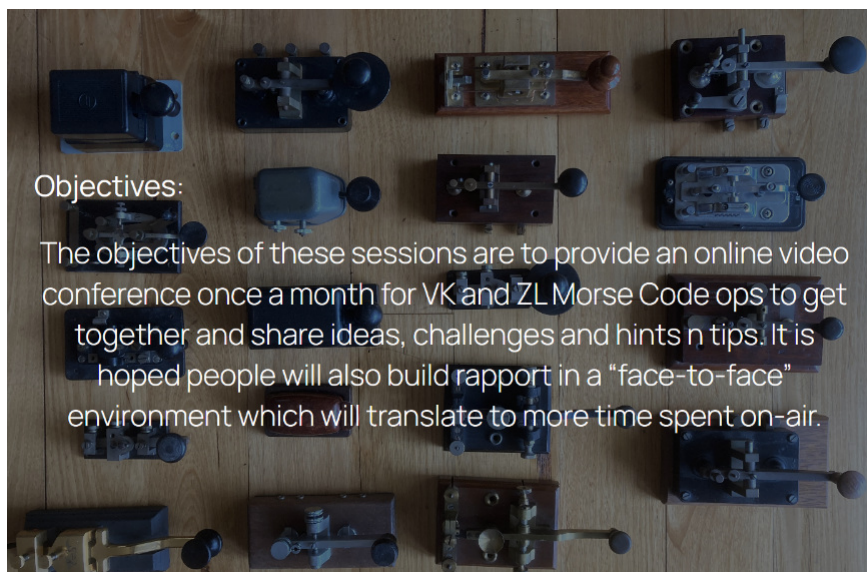
Dits n Dahs

by Chris VK3QB

Hopefully by now most readers are aware of the monthly Zoom sessions I run to promote CW Ops and encourage experienced operators and beginners alike to develop skills and build camaraderie. These sessions typically incorporate an interview with a guest who has an interesting story to share, be it their journey with CW, or informative and entertaining stories about their on-air activities.

We also try to cover off at least one Learning Tip and answer questions.

If you haven't heard about it, head on over and look around. [Click this LINK](#)



Objectives:

The objectives of these sessions are to provide an online video conference once a month for VK and ZL Morse Code ops to get together and share ideas, challenges and hints n tips. It is hoped people will also build rapport in a "face-to-face" environment which will translate to more time spent on-air.

Last month Pete Millis M3KXZ joined us. Pete is a bit of a regular on 20m LP into VK and ZL and he shared his experiences. A summary of his story follows:

"I took an interest in radio at age of 10 thanks to my neighbour who invited me over to build a

crystal radio from a bunch of parts he had. CB (before it was legalised in the UK) and SWL followed.

Like many, I drifted away from the hobby due to work and family commitments, returning in 2004, realised CW was no longer required (it was CW that previously deterred me from becoming licensed) and gained a licence in 2005. I quickly became very active with portable operations.

I learned the code soon after on my own using NZART Teach and G4FON programs and haven't looked back. My first portable rig was the venerable FT817 with an Inverted V doublet for portable operations.

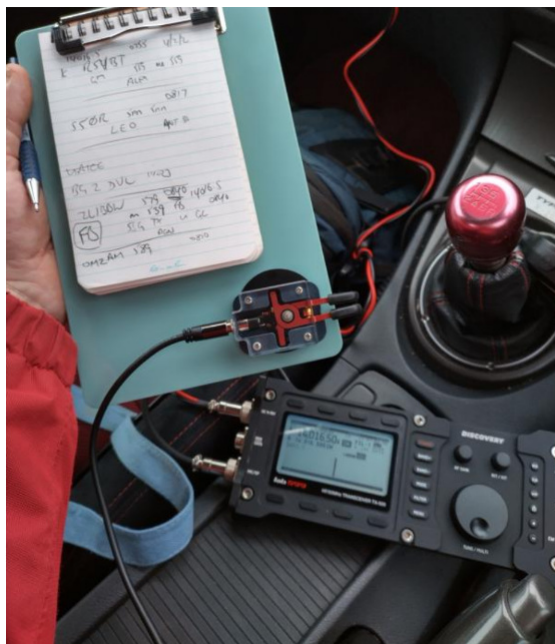
I now use the wonderful Lab599 TX500, and MTR 3B or MTR5B when travelling light. Mostly on a 20m with a ¼ wave vertical (on a fishing rod) with an elevated radial about 2m off the ground when aiming to work DX. This takes just a couple of minutes to set up using guy lines either pegged out or secured using the 'little rock, big rock' method. I also have versions cut for other bands, and a wide selection of other home brew antennas.

Of note, I enjoy getting out before sunrise to work the grey line. I tend to point the radial WSW from here favouring LP for VK and ZL, the direction of the desired signals. Anecdotally, this provides some small gain.

Most activity is early morning UK time (say 0400-0700Z during UK summer, and later for winter) working LP on 20m to ZL and VK. I regularly have QSOs with 5W CW and occasionally SSB. The RBN is a great tool for seeing where the activity is and where my CQs are being heard. Although even if my signal doesn't seem to be going far it's still worth putting calls out and trying for DX. So even if the propagation can look very poor, DX contacts can still be made.

Improving CW requires practice. Once you have the basics, get out there and have QSOs. Confidence will follow. Passion - Persistence - Patience (I made that up yesterday) does it. And rather than seeing learning CW as a chore, see it more as a fun journey!"

The photo below is from one of Pete's activations in his car.



Each month we also discuss a technical topic; usually based on questions received from participants.

Last month the topic was "Using a paddle" and "What about bugs?"

August Session - 18th August 2025

This month our guest will be Mark VK4MFX. Mark is a die-hard QRP(p) operator. In case you're wondering, the lower case p after QRP designates 1W or less. Mark will tell us some success stories and hopefully share a few secrets.

This session is on the 18th August at 0830 UTC (Remember, AEST is UTC +10 hours)

Click [HERE](#) to learn more about our online morse code sessions.

Our technical topic this month will be straight keys. If you have an interest in straight keys come along and have a listen.

If you have any questions or want to know more, just drop me an email. I hope to see you at the next Zoom Session or hear you on-air.

73, Chris VK3QB, #2949
CW Ops OC Ambassador
<https://cwops.org/>

Job Vacancy at QTC

The Editorial Team at QTC is looking for new volunteers. QTC is published monthly, and all of the desktop publishing is done in-house.

Like the poor fellow in the picture, you will have to be able to work to timelines and deadlines, and to be able to obtain completed work from authors in a timely manner without actually harming them.

It's one of the universe's constant struggles, and you will have to be able to manage it whilst still maintaining your sanity and work/life balance. Good luck with that one!

The pay is lousy.



But seriously now....

RASA is seeking people to join the Editorial team. The primary function of the team is to produce the monthly QTC magazine, although other editorial or publications tasks may come your way.

We are seeking people who:

- Can demonstrate a commitment to RASA and its values, and are prepared to agree to RASA's code of conduct.
- Have a good command of English grammar and spelling - you'll be checking and editing other people's work, and hopefully creating some of your own.
- Have basic skills in desktop publishing, or willing to learn and develop these.
- Have a reliable internet connection and their own I.T. equipment.
- Are able to work in an online shared environment (we use Google Workspace), and is willing to learn and develop these skills.
- Is prepared to monitor and respond to emails at least daily, as the distributed member nature of our committees makes regular email use essential.
- Can join regular online team meetings

Interested? Contact RASA by email info@vkradioamateurs.org to discuss.

Contests Coming Up



International Lighthouse Lightship Weekend

An annual amateur radio event - ILLW

The International Lighthouse Lightship Weekend, [ILLW](#), is normally held on the 3rd full weekend in August. In 2025, this 48 hour event takes place from 00.01 UTC on the 16th August 2025 to 24.00 UTC on the 17th August 2025.

The ILLW is not a contest, but stations do keep score.

The ILLW is one of the most popular international amateur radio events in existence probably because there are very few rules and it is not the usual contest type event. There is no entry fee, and there are no prizes for contacting large numbers of other stations.



The 2025 event registrations are [HERE](#). There are about 25 registrations from Australian locations, including VK6CLL at Cape Leeuwin, (pictured on the front cover and on this page) and around 100kms North, VK6CNL at Cape Naturaliste, both on the South Western corner of Australia. Cape Leeuwin marks the boundary between the Indian and Southern Oceans.

Remembrance Day Contest 16th-17th August

The Remembrance Day (RD) Contest commemorates the Amateurs who died during World War II and is designed to encourage friendly participation and help improve the operating skills of participants. It is held on the weekend closest to the 15th August, the date on which hostilities ceased in the southwest Pacific area.

This is one of the contests that attracts entrants who are not hardened testers. It has a great social feel to it and is known as the “friendly” contest.

There’s a clash of dates with the ILLW, however many Oceania ILLW stations will also keep an RD log and give the appropriate exchange.

The RD Contest rules are [HERE](#)

It is not too late

Even if you’ve given no previous thought to participating in either of these events, there’s no time like the present to make your mind up, whether you enter as a club, small group or on your own, all you really need to do is to decide to do it. The rest is mere logistics.